(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that due to this shift we are moving to the new suppliers from traditional suppliers; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Government constantly review the security environment and accordingly decide to induct appropriate equipment for adequate defence preparedness. Procurement of the equipment is made by the Government from various indigenous as well as foreign sources to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces.

Procurement proposals are progressed in accordance with the Defence Procurement Procedure.

Divulging further details in this regard will not be in the national interest.

Crashes of IAF aircrafts

658. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Air Force aircrafts that crashed or met with serious accidents during 2007, with the class of aircraft that crashed and were lost to the Air Force;

(b) the number of Air Force personnel who lost their lives and the extent of loss of civilian lives and property caused due to the mishaps during the year 2007; and

(c) in event of the aircraft crashing in civil areas, the compensation paid by Defence for such losses and the basis therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) A total of ten (10) Indian Air Forces's aircraft crashed during the calendar year 2007. In these accidents, three (3) Kiran, two (2) Jaguar, two (2) MiG-21, one (1) Mirage-2000, one (1) MiG-29 and one (1) Advance Light Helicopter were lost.

(b) Seven Pilots were killed in these accidents. There was no civilian casualty. However, there was loss to civil property worth Rs. 41,700/- in the accident which took place on 24.1.2007.

(c) A compensation of Rs. 41,700/- was paid in case of loss of the civil property in the accident which took place on 24.1.2007. Payment is made on the basis of loss assessment report by the local Revenue Officials duly countersigned by District Magistrate/Deputy Commissioner/Collector of the district.

Shortage of officers in the Army

659. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortage of officers in the 1.13 million strong Army in our country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government is not managing to attract enough bright youngsters for its officer cadre;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether more than 3000 officers have applied for pre-mature retirement and there is shortage of 11,500 officers in an authorized strength of 46,600; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) Presently, there is a shortage of 11153 officers in the Army, mainly in the ranks of Lt. Colonel and below. A total number of 3184 officers have applied for pre-mature retirement during the last 5 years. Several steps have been undertaken by the Army to make the career in the services attractive.

All officers including those in Short Service Commission (SSC) are now eligible to hold substantive rank of Captain, Major and Lieutenant Colonel after 2, 6 and 13 years of reckonable service respectively. In addition to the above, 750 posts of Lieutenant Colonels have been upgraded to Colonel's rank. The tenure of SSC officers has also been extended from 10 years to 14 years.

Besides, the Armed Forces have undertaken sustained Image Projection and publicity campaigns to create awareness among the youth on the advantages of taking up a challenging and satisfying career. Candidate-friendly recruitment procedures to attract more number of candidates and a focused publicity drive in various institutions to attract potential candidates have been undertaken. Awareness campaigns, participation in career fairs and exhibitions, advertisements in print and electronic media, motivational lectures in schools, colleges are also some of the other measures in this direction.

The Government has also appointed VI Central Pay Commission to go into the question of revision of pay and allowances etc. of all the Government servants including the Armed Forces. The three Services have presented a joint memorandum to the Pay Commission suggesting revision of pay and allowances and other service conditions. The matter has also been discussed with the Pay Commision by the three Service Chiefs and officers in the Ministry of Defence.

Transfer of T-90 tanks technology

660. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country had entered into agreement with Russian manufacturers of the T-90 tanks regarding its technology transfer; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Russian manufacturers have been reluctant in transferring the technology; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the issue has been taken up with the leadership of that country during the bilateral visits, and if so, what has been the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. A Transfer of Technology contract was concluded in February 2001 with Russia for indigenous manufacture of T90 tanks.

(b) and (c) Transfer of Technology documents for indigenous production of T-90 tanks have been received. Some details related to steel of gun barrel and armour plates are required. Matter has been taken up with the Russian leadership during bilateral meetings at various